

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

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Jared Huffman
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, 6TH DISTRICT

CHAIR, Environmental Safety
& Toxic Materials Committee

COMMITTEES
Appropriations
Utilities and Commerce
Water Parks and Wildlife

March 13, 2008

A.G. Kawamura, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 N Street, Room 400
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Secretary Kawamura:

I am writing to request your suspension of the proposal by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to conduct aerial spraying this summer using a pesticide that has not been tested for human health or environmental effects in an attempt to eradicate the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM).

Through recent legislative oversight activities, and scrutiny by the environmental community and concerned citizens, new information has come to light that not only underscores public health and environmental concerns about the proposed aerial spraying, but also calls into question the very premise of CDFA's LBAM eradication program. This information includes, among other things:

- New research and opinions from University of California scientists indicating that LBAM may not pose a serious economic or ecological problem, and that any threat of crop damage would best be addressed by selective pest management strategies in agricultural areas rather than aerial spraying in urban areas.
- Reports of hundreds of people with health complaints in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties, who were subject to the aerial spray program in September, October, and November, 2007.
- New expert opinions indicating that CDFA's aerial spraying program will not achieve its goal of eradicating LBAM from California.
- Acknowledgments by CDFA officials that even in infested areas, due to the moth's very limited mobility, LBAM populations are not expected to spread more than a few hundred yards over the course of a year – calling into question why CDFA is rushing forward with the extreme measure of aerially spraying an untested pesticide over urban areas, instead of taking the time to evaluate potential health and environmental effects and explore alternatives to aerial spraying.

For these reasons, I ask you to suspend the aerial spraying program and take the time to develop a more thoughtful, reasoned approach to addressing the LBAM issue, which would also allow enough time for the legislature to vote on the various LBAM-related bills that were introduced last month.

Working cooperatively with the Legislature, I believe CDFA can develop and implement an LBAM program that reflects sound science and protects our health, environment and economy. For that to happen, your leadership is needed to reconsider the proposal to conduct aerial spraying this summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jared Huffman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JARED HUFFMAN, Chair

Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxics Materials Committee